

Distaste

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Summary: Hiccup has always had an Un-Viking-like distaste for killing.

Distaste

****One of those charming late night ideas I HAD to write before I lost the words. ****

For as long as he could remember, Hiccup Haddock hated the idea of killing.

When he was three, Hiccup made the connection between the limp rabbits his father brought home and the stew his mother made for supper that night. He was horrified. "I can't eat this," he told his mother.

"Don't be silly," his father said.

"Why not, Hiccup?" his mother asked, tucking into her own stew.

"Because you killed the rabbits for it," Hiccup choked.

"Hiccup!" His father exclaimed, his tone disapproving, with a hint of fear for his son, already showing un-Viking-like characteristics.

"Stoick!" His mother snapped. "Let me handle this one. You don't have to eat it, love," she told him. "I have some good bread and sauce you can eat instead. We'll talk after supper."

He ate his bread and sauce and tried to not notice his father looking at him.

That night when his mother tucked him into his bed, she said gently,

"Hiccup, I know you're upset because you like the animals we eat. I understand. But see, if we didn't, the balance of life would be disrupted. Say, the rabbits. If we didn't eat rabbits, they'd overpopulate and there would be so many they'd eat so much food the other animals wouldn't have enough and would get sick and die. And then the animals that eat those animals would die because they have no food either."

"So we're doing what's right, killing them and eating them," Hiccup said slowly.

"Yes, as long as we kill them quickly and as painlessly as possible and with good reason," she replied, leaning to kiss his forehead.

"What about the dragons?"

She paused. "We have good reason for that, love. We have to protect ourselves, our family and our food. If we have to kill, we must."

"Okay," he replied. She smoothed her hand over his hair.

"Goodnight, love," she said, and he slept soundly with her comforting words ruminating in his head.

It wasn't until after his mother died and his father started to worry after him he changed his ambitions, decided to overstep his pacifist instincts to become a fearsome dragon killer. They had killed Vikings, why shouldn't he kill them? But some part of him flinched at the idea. He might have aspired to kill the Night Fury, but he still couldn't bear to step on a spider in the house and instead trapped and released it outside. His mother's words kept coming back to him: _"with good reason." _Was there ever really a good reason to kill anything? He wasn't a god, why was he allowed to choose who got to live and die? Why was _anyone_ allowed to?

Those were uncomfortable questions for a little kid, so he stopped allowing himself to think them and focused on his goal.

He was starting to think the _gods_ were against him becoming a dragon killer. As he got older the assurances he'd get bigger soon faded. He was going to stay scrawny, and though he held on to a desperate hope, he knew he wasn't going to become bulky and he accounted for that in his plans. He put his brains and quick hands to good use and started designing devices to do the job for him. Except somehow, he was always off, and every time his father's voice got sharper.

He had to kill a dragon. That was everything in Berk, and Berk was...home. It snowed nine months of the year and hailed the other three, and the dragons were always wreaking havoc. But it was where he was born, and where his mother died, and where he had grown up.

That was good reason, wasn't it? Acceptance?

The questions he had pushed down came back to haunt him when he was holding his dagger over the dragon. His prey. This was destiny. His destiny was here and now, and his heart was faltering. He tried to

convince himself, "I'm going to kill you, dragon. I'm going to cut out your heart and take it to my father. I am a Viking. I am a VIKING!" Its open eyes looked into his soul, and he saw pride and fear in them. He saw himselfâ€"it was scared too. It was as scared as he was. It closed his eyes, ready. It knew what he was. A Viking. A killer.

Was this a good reason? His mother's voice asked. Was he killing for the sake of killing?

He was. What he knew and had always known was wrong, and he was doing it. Selfishly.

He had been scared of the dragon, and of the act he was trying to commit. Now he was afraid of _himself_.

What was he _capable_ of? When had he lost his morals?

He cut the dragon loose. He knew what was right. He knew what it meant for him, and he chose it anyway.

He was the first Viking in 300 years who wouldn't kill a dragon, but heyâ€|he was the first to ride one.

And that made everything perfectly right.

End
file.